

REVERENCE FOR AGE

JOSEPH AND HIS DEVOTION TO HIS OLD FATHER

Dr. Talmage Preaches a Sermon on Fatherly Love and Filial Devotion—Rusticity in Palace—The Ingrate and the Fate That Should Be His

Dr. Talmage in his sermon shows that a scene of tenderness and reverence and tells us how we ought to treat old people. His text is Genesis xiv, 28, "I will go and see him before I die."

Jacob had long since passed the hundred year milestone. In those times people were distinguished for longevity. In the centuries after persons lived to great age. Galen, the most celebrated physician of his time, took so little of his own medicine that he lived to 140 years. A man of undoubted veracity on the witness stand in England swore that he remembered an event 150 years before. Lord Bacon speaks of a countess who had cut three sets of teeth and died at 140 years. Joseph Crele of Pennsylvania lived 140 years. In 1857 a book was printed containing the names of 37 persons who lived 140 years, and the names of 11 persons who lived 150 years.

Among the grand old people of whom we have record was Jacob, the shepherd of the text. But he had a bad lot of boys. They were jealous and ambitious and every day ungrateful. Joseph, however, seemed to be an exception, but he had been gone many years, and the probability was that he was dead. As sometimes now in a house you will find kept at the table a vacant chair, a plate, a knife, a fork, for some deceased member of the family, so Jacob kept in his heart a place for his beloved Joseph. There sits the old man, the flock of 140 years in their flight having alighted long enough to leave the marks of their claw on forehead and cheek and temple. His long beard shows down over his chest. His eyes are somewhat dim, and he can see farther when they are closed than when they are open, for he can see clear back into the time when beautiful Rachel, his wife, was living and his children shook the oriental abode with their merriment.

THE DEAD ALIVE.

The centenarian is sitting dreaming over the past when he hears a wagon rumbling to the front door. He gets up and goes to the door to see who has arrived, and his long absent son, Joseph, comes in and announces to him that Joseph, instead of being dead, is living in an Egyptian palace, with all the investiture of prime minister, next to the king in the mightiest empire of all the world. The news was too sudden and too glad for the old man, and his cheeks whiten, and his eyes are dazzled, and his staff falls out of his hand, and he would have dropped had not the sons caught him and led him to a lounge and put cold water on his face and fanned him a little.

In that half delirium the old man mumbles something about his son Joseph. He says: "Joseph, do you mean my dear son who has been dead so long? You don't mean Joseph, do you?" But after they had fully resuscitated him and the news was confirmed the tears began their winding way down the crossroads of the wrinkles, and the sunken lips of the old man quiver, and he brings his bent fingers together as he says: "Joseph is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die."

It did not take the old man a great while to get ready, I warrant you. He put on the best clothes that the shepherd's wardrobe could afford. He got into the wagon and though the aged are cautious and like to ride slow the wagon did not get along fast enough for this old man, and when the wagon with the old man met Joseph's chariot coming down to meet him and Joseph got out of the chariot and got into the wagon and threw his arms around his father's neck it was an antithesis of pomp, of filial affection, and paternal love, which leaves so much in doubt whether we had better laugh or cry, that we do both. So Jacob kept the resolution of the text—"I will go and see him before I die."

THE CORD THAT IS NOT SNAPPED.

What a strong and unflinching thing is parental attachment. Was it not almost time for Jacob to forget Joseph? The hot sun of many summers had blazed on the heath; the river Nile had overflowed and receded, overflowed and receded again and again; the seed had been sown and the harvest reaped; stars rose and set; years of plenty and years of famine had passed on, but the love of Jacob for Joseph in his heart is overwhelmingly dramatic. Oh, this is a cord that is not snapped, though pulled on by many decades! Though when the little child expired the parents may not have been more than 25 years of age, and now they are 75, yet the vision of the cradle, and the childish face, and the first embrace of the infantile lips are fresh today, in spite of the passage of half a century. Joseph was as fresh in Jacob's memory as ever, though at 17 years of age the boy had disappeared from the old homestead. I found in our family record the story of an infant that had died 50 years before, and I said to myself, "What a record and what does it mean?" Their chief answer was a long deep sigh. It was yet to them a very tender sorrow. What does that all mean? Why, it means our children departed are ours yet, and the cord of attachment reaching across the years will hold us until it brings us together in the palace, as Jacob and Joseph were brought together. That is one thing that makes old people die happy. They realize it is reunion with those from whom they have long been separated.

I am often asked as pastor—and every pastor is asked the question—"Will my children be children in heaven and for ever children?" Well, there was, no doubt, a great change in Joseph from the time Jacob lost him and the time when Jacob found him—between the boy of 17 years of age and the man in middle life, his forehead developed with his great business state. But Jacob was glad to get back Joseph anyhow, and it did not make much difference to the old man whether the boy looked older or younger. And it will be enough joy for that parent if he can get back that son, that daughter, at the gate of heaven, whether the departed loved one shall come a cherub or in full grown angelhood. There must be a change wrought by that celestial climate and by those supernal years, but it will only be from loveliness to more loveliness and from health to more radiant health.

WHEN THE OLD PARENTS COME.

Oh, parent as you think of the darling

ling panting and white in membranous croup, I want you to know it will be gloriously bettered in that land where there has never been a death and where all the inhabitants will live on in the great future as long as God. Joseph was Joseph notwithstanding the palace and your children will be your children notwithstanding all the raining splendors of everlasting noon. What a thrilling visit was that of the old shepherd to the prime minister Joseph! I see the old countryman seated in the palace looking around at the mirrors and the fountains and the carved pillars, and oh, how he wishes that Rachel, his wife, was alive and that she could come with him to see their son in his great house. "Oh," says the old man within himself, "I do wish Rachel could be here to see all this!" I visited at the farmhouse of the father of Millard Fillmore when the son was president of the United States, and the octogenarian farmer entertained me until 11 o'clock at night telling me what great things he saw in his son's house at Washington and what Daniel Webster said to him and how grandly Millard treated his father in the White House. The old man's face was illuminated with the story until almost the midnight. He had just been visiting his son at the capital. And I suppose it was something of the same joy that thrilled the heart of the old shepherd as he stood in the palace of the prime minister.

It is a great day with you when your old parents come to visit you. Your little children stand around with great wide open eyes, wondering how anybody could be so old. The parents cannot stay many days, for they are a little restless, and especially at nightfall, when they sleep better in their own bed, but while they tarry you somehow feel there is a benediction in every room in the house. They are a little feeble, and you make it as easy as you can for them, and you realize they will probably not visit you very often—perhaps never again. You go to their room after they have retired at night to see if the lights are properly put out, for the old people understand candle and lamp better than the modern apparatus for illumination. In the morning, with real interest in their health, you ask how they rested last night. Joseph, in the historical scene of the text, did not think any more of his father than you do of your parents. The probability is, before they leave your house they half spoil your children with kindness.

THE FIRST AND THE LAST.

Grandfather and grandmother are more lenient and indulgent to your children than they ever were with you. And what wonders of revelation in the bombazine pocket of the one and the sleeve of the other! Blessed is the home where Christian parents come to visit. Whatever may have been the style of the architecture when they came, it is a palace before they leave. If they visit you 50 times, the two most memorable visits will be the first and the last. Those two pictures will hang in the hall of your memory while memory lasts, and you will remember just how they looked, and where they sat, and what they said, and at what figure of the carpet, and at what door-sill they parted with you, giving you the final goodbye. Do not be embarrassed if your father comes to town and in the manner of the shepherd, and if your mother come to town and there be in her hat no sign of costly millinery. The wife of the Emperor Theodosius said a wise thing when she said, "Husband, remember what you lately were and remember what you are and be thankful."

By this time you will notice what kindly provision Joseph made for his father Jacob. Joseph did not say: "I can't have the old man around this palace. How clumsy he would look climbing up these marble stairs and walking over those roses! Then he would be putting his hands upon some of these frescoes. People would wonder where that old greenhorn came from. He would shock all the Egyptian court with his manners at table. Besides that, he might get sick on my hands, and he might be querulous, and he might talk to me as though I were only a boy, when I am the second man in all the realm. Of course he must not suffer, and if there is famine in his country—and I hear there is—I will send him some provisions, but I can't take a man from Padanaram and introduce him into this polite Egyptian court. What a nuisance it is to have poor relations!" Joseph did not say that, but he rushed out to meet his father with perfect abandon of affection and brought him up to the palace and introduced him to the emperor and provided for all the rest of the father's days, and nothing was too good for the old man while living, and when he was dead Joseph, with military escort, took his father's remains to the family cemetery. Would God all children were as kind to their parents!

THE INGRATE AND HIS FATE.

If the father have large property and be wise enough to keep it in his own name, he will be respected by the heirs, but how often it is when the son finds his father in famine, as Joseph found Jacob in famine, the young people make it very hard for the old man. They are so surprised he eats with a knife instead of a fork. They are chagrined at his antediluvian habits. They are provoked because he cannot hear as well as he used to, and when he asks it over again and the son has to make it very hard for the old man. "I hope you hear that!" How long he must wear the old coat or the old hat before they get him a new one! How chagrined they are at his independence of the English grammar! How long he hangs on! Seventy years and not gone yet! Eighty years and not gone yet! Will he ever go? They think of no use to have a doctor in his last sickness and go up to the drug store and get something that makes him worse and economize on a coffin and beat the undertaker down to the last point, giving a note for the last amount which they never pay. I have officiated at obsequies of aged people where the family have been so inordinately resigned to Providence that I felt like taking my text from Proverbs, "The eye that mocketh at his father and refuseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out and the young eagles shall eat it." In other words, such an ingrate ought to have a flock of crows for palbearers. I congratulate you if you have the honor of providing for aged parents. The blessing of the Lord God of Joseph and Jacob will be on you.

I rejoice to remember that though my father lived in a plain house the most of his days he died in a mansion provided by the filial piety of a son who had achieved a fortune. There the octogenarian sat, and the servants waited on him, and there was plenty of horses and plenty of carriages to convey him, and a power in which to sit on long summer afternoons, dreaming over the past and there was not in room in the house where he was not welcome, and there were

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musical instruments of all sorts to regale him, and when life had passed the neighbors came out and carried him to the village Machpelah and put him down besides the Rachel with whom he had lived more than half a century. Share your successes with the old people. The probability is that the principles they inculcated achieved your fortune. Give them a Christian percentage of kindly consideration. Let Joseph divide with Jacob the pasture fields of Goshen and the glories of the Egyptian court.

A TRIBUTE TO THE SPINSTER.

And here I would like to sing the praises of the spinster who remained unmarried to aged parents. The brutal world calls these self-sacrificing ones peculiar or angular, but if you had had as many annoyances as they have had Xantippe would have been an angel compared with you. It is easier to take care of five rollicking, romping children than of one childish old man. Among the best women of our land are those who allowed the best of life to pass away while they were caring for their parents. While other maidens were asleep they were soaking the old man's feet or tucking up the covers around the invalid mother. While other maidens were in the cotillion they were dancing attendance upon rheumatism and spreading plasters for the lame back of the septuagenarian and heating catnip tea for insomnia.

In almost every circle of our kindred there has been some queen of self-sacrifice to whom jeweled hand after jeweled hand was offered in marriage, but who stood on the old place, became the center of filial obligation until the health was gone and the attractiveness of personal presence had vanished. Brutal society may call such a one by a nickname. God calls her daughter, and heaven calls her saint, and I call her domestic martyr. A half dozen ordinary maidens will not, as much nobility as could be found in the smallest joint of the little finger of her left hand. Although the world has stood 6,000 years, this is the first apotheosis of maidenhood, although in the long line of those who have declined marriage that they might be qualified for some special mission are the names of Anna Ross and Margaret Breckinridge and Mary Shelton and Anna Etheridge and Georgiana Willetts, the angels of the battlefields of Fair Oaks and Lookout Mountain and Chancellorsville and Gettysburg, and, though single life has been honored by the fact that the three grandest men of the Bible, John and Paul and Christ, were celibates.

"OVER THE HILLS TO THE PALACE."

Let the ungrateful world sneer at the maiden aunt, but God has a throne burning for her arrival, and on one side of that throne in heaven there is a vase containing two jewels, the one brighter than the Kohinoor of London Tower and the other larger than any locket ever found in the districts of Golconda, the one jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it to father;" the other jewel by the lapidary of the palace cut with the words, "Inasmuch as ye did it to mother." "Over the hills to the Poorhouse" is the exquisite ballad of Will Warleton, who found an old woman who had been turned off by her prosperous sons, but I thank God I may find in my text, "Over the hills to the palace."

As if to disgust us with unfilial conduct, the Bible presents us with the story of Micah, who stole the 1,100 shekels from his mother, and the story of Absalom, who tried to dethrone his father. But all history is beautiful with stories of filial fidelity. Epaminondas, the warrior, found his chief delight in reciting to his parents his victories. There goes Aeneas from burning Troy, on his shoulders Anchises, his father. The Athenians punished with death any unfilial conduct. There goes beautiful Ruth escorting amid the howling of the wolves and the barking of the jackals. John Lawrence, burned at the stake in Colchester, was cheered in the flames by his children, who said, "Oh, God strengthen thy servant and keep thy promise." And Christ in the hour of excruciation provided for his old mother. Jacob kept his resolution, "I will go and see him before I die," and a little while after we find them walking the tessellated floor of the palace, Jacob and Joseph, the prime minister proud of the shepherd.

I may say in regard to the most of you that your parents have probably visited you for the last time or will soon pay you such a visit, and I have wondered if they will ever visit you in the king's palace. "Oh," you say, "I am in the pit of sin!" Joseph was in the pit.

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prison of mine iniquity!" Joseph was once in prison. "Oh," you say, "I didn't have a fair chance. I was denied maternal attendance. 'Oh,' you say, 'I am far away from the land of my nativity!' Joseph was far away from home. 'Oh,' you say, 'I have been betrayed and exasperated!' Did not Joseph's brethren sell him to a passing Ishmaelish caravan? Yet God brought him to that embazoned residence, and if you will trust his grace in Jesus Christ you, too, will be emancipated. Oh, what a day that will be when the old folks come from an adjoining mansion in heaven and find you amid the alabaster pillars of the throneroom and living with the king! They are coming up the steps now, and the epauleted guard of the palace rushes in and says, 'Your father's coming, your mother's coming!' And when under the arches of precious stones and on the balustrade of portphyry you greet each other the scene will eclipse the meeting on the Goshen highway, when Joseph and Jacob fell on each other's neck and wept a good while.

THE REUNION.

But, oh, how changed the old folks will be! Their cheeks smoothed into the flesh of a little child, their stooped posture lifted into immortal symmetry, their feet, now so feeble, then with the springiness of a bounding roe, as they shall say to you, "A spirit passed this way from earth and told us that you were wayward and dissipated after we left the world, but you have repented, our prayer has been answered, and you are here, and we used to visit you on earth before we died now we visit you in your new home after our ascension," and father will say, "Mother, don't you see Joseph is yet alive?" and mother will say, "Yes father, Joseph is yet alive," and then they will talk over their earthly anxieties in regard to you, and the midnight supplications in your behalf, and they will recite to each other the old Scripture passage with which they used to cheer their staggering faith, "I will be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." Oh, the palace, the palace, the palace! That is what Richard Baxter called "The Saints' Everlasting Rest." That is what John Bunyan called the "Celestial City." That is Young's "Night Thoughts" turned into morning exultations. That is Gray's "Elegy in a Churchyard" turned to resurrection spectacle. That is the "Scottish Soldier's Night" exchanged for the cotter's Sabbath morning. That is the shepherd of Salisbury plains amid the flocks on the hills of heaven. That is the famine struck Paananaram turned in to a rich field of Goshen. That is Jacob visiting Joseph at the emerald castle.

The Lynches at Southport

The Southport Standard of Thursday, October 7th, says:

"We have been told that all the women of the 'Sanctified Band' who are here without their husbands, have been ejected from their homes by cruel husbands. One, Geo. N. Smith, sends us affidavit to the effect that he and his wife had lived together peaceably for thirteen years, until the 'Band' induced her to follow them, leaving him and two children in Perquimans county."

We take the following correspondence from the Standard of the same date: "I received from Mr. W. B. Edwards, Editor Southport Standard:

Please allow me space in your paper for one more letter in reference to the Lynches, and I shall bother you no more.

In the Standard of the 23rd inst. there is a communication that seems squarely to shake me on my own letter that appeared in your paper on the 18th inst. 'warning the people of Southport to have nothing to do with the Sanctifiedists.'"

I for one am surely pleased to hear that Lynch has visited one place, in his wanderings, that he has not caused the people to rise against him, and his accused teachers, and Morehead City has been singularly blessed that her good people have found no fault with Lynch and his 'free loveism,' perhaps Lynch has conveniently changed his teachings so as to escape the clutches of an outraged people.

If I had have taken 'newspaper statements' I could probably never have written you in reference to Lynch. I wrote from personal knowledge, as I heard a good deal of his harangue for quite some time at Kitty Hawk.

I hope and trust I shall be the last one to place a 'stumbling block in the way of any good they may do' but my idea's 'I need not pretend to be no critic of the teachings I have personally heard from Lynch. Does Sanctification teach that a wife should leave husband and children if he refuses to become sanctified? Or the husband the wife? Or children their homes, if mother and father refused Sanctification? And that adultery was between those that were sanctified? If these teachings are 'good,' God save us from Sanctification, Lynch preached and taught the above, and here, and not deny it, called 'The Wesley and others of the 'Holy Club' had any of those teachings, God save me, and mine from Wesleyism. I see plenty of works that are of the Devil' that are prospering, and I tell our people plainly that Lynch and his gang with their hellish designs, will yet drag our town into incalculable evil if given a chance."

I want the people of Southport and Lynch in particular to understand that I am personally responsible for what I write, and that I will not be responsible for anything that they may say or do. In other words, I have a 'higher regard for the people of Southport than myself,' and I tell our people once for all that if past experience is any guide to the future, if we are not careful Lynch will yet cause them trouble. In 'giving them a hearing' our people are giving them moral support and feeding the warp that will sooner or later sting to death the home life of some of our good people.

ASA DOSHER.

The Cody Brothers Released

Butte, Mont., October 7.—The Cody brothers, held at Red Lodge for the North Carolina authorities, have been released on habeas corpus on the ground of the insufficiency in the sheriff's return. The men are under sentence of death for burglary in North Carolina.

THE MERCHANTS ASSOCIATION

The Organization Perfected Last Night and a Board of Directors Elected—The Directors to Meet for Business Next Monday Night

The Merchants Association met last night at 8:30 o'clock at the Red Men's hall, on North Front street, for the purpose of affecting a permanent organization.

Mr. D. C. Whitted, the chairman, presided, and Mr. James H. Cowan acted as secretary.

After the object of the meeting had been explained, Major W. A. Johnson, of the committee appointed to draft the constitution and by-laws, made a report. For the benefit of those who were not present when the constitution was adopted, he read the constitution and a set of by-laws which had been drafted and were submitted by the committee.

On motion the by-laws were read one at a time, and after discussion they were adopted, as follows.

ARTICLE I—MEETING.

Section 1. The regular annual meeting shall be held the second Monday in October of each year.

Sec. 2. A special meeting may be called by the president upon a written request of five members.

Sec. 3. The president or vice president and six directors shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

ARTICLE II—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

1. Reading minutes of previous meeting.

2. Unfinished business.

3. Reports of committees.

4. Reports of secretary and treasurer.

5. New business.

6. Reading and correction of minutes.

7. Adjournment.

ARTICLE III.

Section 1. The membership fee shall be \$2.00.

Sec. 2. The monthly dues shall be 50 cents per month, payable on the 10th of each month.

ARTICLE IV.

It shall be the duty, and obligatory upon every member of the association, to furnish the secretary and treasurer a list of unpaid accounts on his books, past due four months.

The election of a board of directors was then declared in order, and on motion of Mr. Sol. Sternberger the association went into the election of a board of directors to consist of eleven, according to the constitution.

The following were placed in nomination from the floor and were elected directors for the ensuing year: Messrs. George B. French, S. H. Fishblade, W. E. Worth, W. A. Johnson, D. C. Whitted, William Nistie, M. W. Jacob, D. C. Love, J. F. Garrell, Martin Schnibben and J. H. Thomas.

It was expressed as the sense of the meeting that a permanent secretary be employed at a reasonable salary, to receive and make up lists of bad paying customers furnished by individual merchants and to collect such accounts as may be entrusted to him. It was also agreed that it was advisable to engage a room and open a permanent office for the association and as headquarters for the secretary.

After discussing in a general way the object of the association and the benefits to be derived from it by the business community in particular and the city in general, Mr. Fishblade urged the association to take steps to inaugurate a series of cheap excursions to the city from along all the lines of railway. He stated that Charleston and Richmond had adopted this plan of drawing business to their cities, and Wilmington merchants would, in his opinion, find it would be a paying investment. He suggested the Richmond plan of chartering trains alternately on all the railroads, one on one road one week and one on another the next week, etc., the merchants paying the charter price and putting round trip tickets at a very low price, and making up the deficit in the charter amount if there is any.

Mr. Fishblade suggestion was heartily endorsed, and it will come up later for the consideration of the directors.

The association then adjourned, after which the directors held an informal conference and agreed to call a meeting of the board on next Monday night.

After the adjournment of the meeting, several of those present subscribed to the by-laws and became members of the association.

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Mount Olive Jettings

(Correspondence of The Messenger.)

Mount Olive, N. C., October 7. As the price of cotton has jumped a little the farmers are taking the advice the farmers are taking, and think there has been more cotton brought to this market today than on any day before in this season, and we think our buyers are paying their outside limits for it.

There is to be an evening entertainment at Martin's hall next Thursday, the 14th instant, at 8 o'clock p. m. under the management of Mrs. H. L. Cohen and the receipts will be given to the churches of Mt. Olive.

Mr. E. W. Southernland has begun the work of erecting a livery stable on Front street, just one door from Dr. W. C. Steele's office.

Every cotton gin in this section is getting all the cotton it can gin and some have to gin at night to keep up with their work.

John Griffin, of Zanesville, O., says: "I never lived a day for thirty years without suffering agony, until a box of Dr. Witt's Witch Hazel Salve cured my piles." For piles and rectal troubles, cuts, bruises, sprains, eczema and all skin troubles we Witt's Witch Hazel Salve is unequalled. R. R. Bellamy.

North Carolina Presbyterian reports 14 additions to its church in North Carolina.

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